

# CONNECTICUT GreenGuide

SPRING 2016

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FuelCell Energy toward profitability

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# Positives, challenges for 2016

**I**s it just me, or does 2016 feel like it could be big for energy in Connecticut? Actions by Congress and state government alike — from the renewal of a vital 30 percent investment tax credit for renewable projects to a new and innovative state approach to buying clean energy — are helping drive a sense of momentum.

Be sure to check out **page 4**, which details the significant scaling up of solar and fuel cell projects in Connecticut that could result from a multi-state bidding process for clean resources.

Speaking of momentum (and fuel cells), our cover story this issue, which starts on **page 7**, details the recent progress of Danbury's FuelCell Energy, one of several fuel cell makers in a state that's among the friendliest in the country to the industry. FuelCell is preparing to help build the largest fuel cell plant in the world in Beacon Falls.


The company's CEO says he's excited about that deal and others, but he remains committed to a long-term strategy of growth and opening up new markets, such as hydrogen cars and helping reduce coal plant emissions.

Not all is hunky-dory. As energy attorney and longtime Green Guide contributor Lee Hoffman details on **page 13**, waste-to-energy plants — an important alternative to landfilling — are beginning to feel the pressure of lower wholesale electricity prices and rock-bottom prices for their renewable energy credits.

Will the legislature step in to prop up the plants? Time will tell.

A quick note: Many readers have met or spoke with former Green Guide editor and founder Brad Kane over the past few years. I can report that Kane is doing well as the editor of our sister business journal in Worcester, Mass., where I myself reported for several years before moving to Hartford in 2013.

I look forward to building on his energy coverage here in Connecticut.

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**Matt Pilon**  
Editor



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# News Cycle

## ENERGY NEWS IN BRIEF

### Moody's: Capacity auction bad for generators

ISO-New England's recent forward capacity auction was good for ratepayers, with the cost to guarantee that power plants will be ready to deliver when needed in 2019 falling from \$4 billion to \$3 billion.

But that 25 percent drop in capacity prices wasn't so great for merchant generators, Moody's said.

The ratings agency said the decline would hurt cash flow for NRG Energy, Dominion Resources, NextEra Energy and others.

ISO-NE region remains the most lucrative merchant generation market, Moody's said, but it will face continued pressure from the spread of wind and solar, as well as expected major transmission projects like Northern Pass, which aims to bring Canadian hydropower to the region.

### Mass. solar industry swamps CT

While incentives have boosted Connecticut's solar industry in recent years, the state has a ways to go before it catches up job-wise with Massachusetts and other states.

The 2015 Solar Foundation solar job census pegged Connecticut's industry employment at 1,951. That was the 18th highest per capita in the country, the report said.

More than half of those jobs were solar installers, while 29 percent were sales and distribution positions. Manufacturing accounted for just 4 percent of Connecticut's solar jobs.

Hartford County had 697 solar jobs, which was the most of any Connecticut county.

The rankings were again dominated by California, while Massachusetts had the second-highest number of solar jobs per capita, at 15,095, the survey said. That's 74 percent of all solar jobs in New England.

### Bridgeport Harbor to make the switch to gas

Connecticut's last coal-fired plant will be no more in just several years.

The owner of Bridgeport Harbor Generating Station, Public Service Enterprise Group, plans to convert the plant to run on gas by 2019. The new gas plant will cost more than \$550 million.

New England has relied more heavily on natural gas in recent years, both for environmental reasons and because its price has come down with the advent of fracking, which provides a steady supply of gas deposits that were once difficult to reach.

Coal was just 5 percent of New England's power mix in 2014, down from 18 percent at the turn of the century.

### CT solar arrays could get much bigger

While Connecticut's solar jobs still lag behind many other states, it could soon move up the rankings, depending on the outcome of a first-of-its-kind bidding process currently underway.

As soon as next month, Connecticut residents will know the likelihood of a handful of major solar projects being built.

As part of a three-state RFP, developers proposed approximately 240 megawatts of Connecticut-based clean energy generation.

Of that amount, 63 megawatts is from a fuel cell park in Beacon Falls (see our cover story on page 7), but the remainder are ground-mounted solar farms.

The solar proposals include a 50-megawatt array straddling Brooklyn and Canterbury; 44-megawatt installation near Foxwoods; 26-megawatt solar farm in Simsbury; and 20 megawatts straddling Enfield and Somers — which is currently home to one of the state's largest solar fields (five megawatts owned by Dominion).





(Left) Web Industries in Killingly; (Top right, left to right) Leadership team Shannon Flanagan, Mark Dupuis, Pat Roy, Jim Evans, Todd Pihl, Ray Stockwell and Ed Martins; (Bottom right) One of the company's six "idea teams."

PHOTOS | PABLO ROBLES

## SMART BUSINESS: WEB INDUSTRIES

# Efficiency upgrades help precision manufacturer outbid competitor

In 1969, Bob Fulton had a dream, entrepreneurial determination and \$10,000. He founded Web Industries, a Massachusetts-based provider of contract converting and manufacturing services with operations in the Dayville section of Killingly as well as several other states.

Today, the 100 percent employee-owned company encourages its workers to find ways to enhance operations, particularly as overseas competition intensifies.

That mentality led Web to evaluate its older manufacturing equipment at its Connecticut location and partner with Eversource to develop an energy savings plan.

"With so many new technologies in the manufacturing industry, we felt it was important for us to take a closer look at our systems," said Todd Pihl, general manager at Web Industries. "This analysis found that newer, energy-efficient equipment could better handle our customers' requirements, operate at higher speeds, increase safety and ultimately cut down on energy costs."

Web zoned in on how to squeeze efficiencies out of its most energy-intensive activity: the manufacturing process.

Eversource helped Web secure more than \$526,000 in incentives from Energize Connecticut, a state program

that offset 34 percent of the \$1.5 million project cost.

The upgrades included more efficient motors, known as electronically commutated or "brushless" motors, as well as variable-frequency drives for speed control.


The project also included new LED lighting with occupancy sensors and advanced controls.

Together, the improvements have reduced idle heating time, scrap, and the amount of energy Web uses to manufacture products.

The company expects to save more than \$200,000 in electricity costs annually, and the savings helped it outbid an overseas competitor for a multi-year contract with an undisclosed customer.

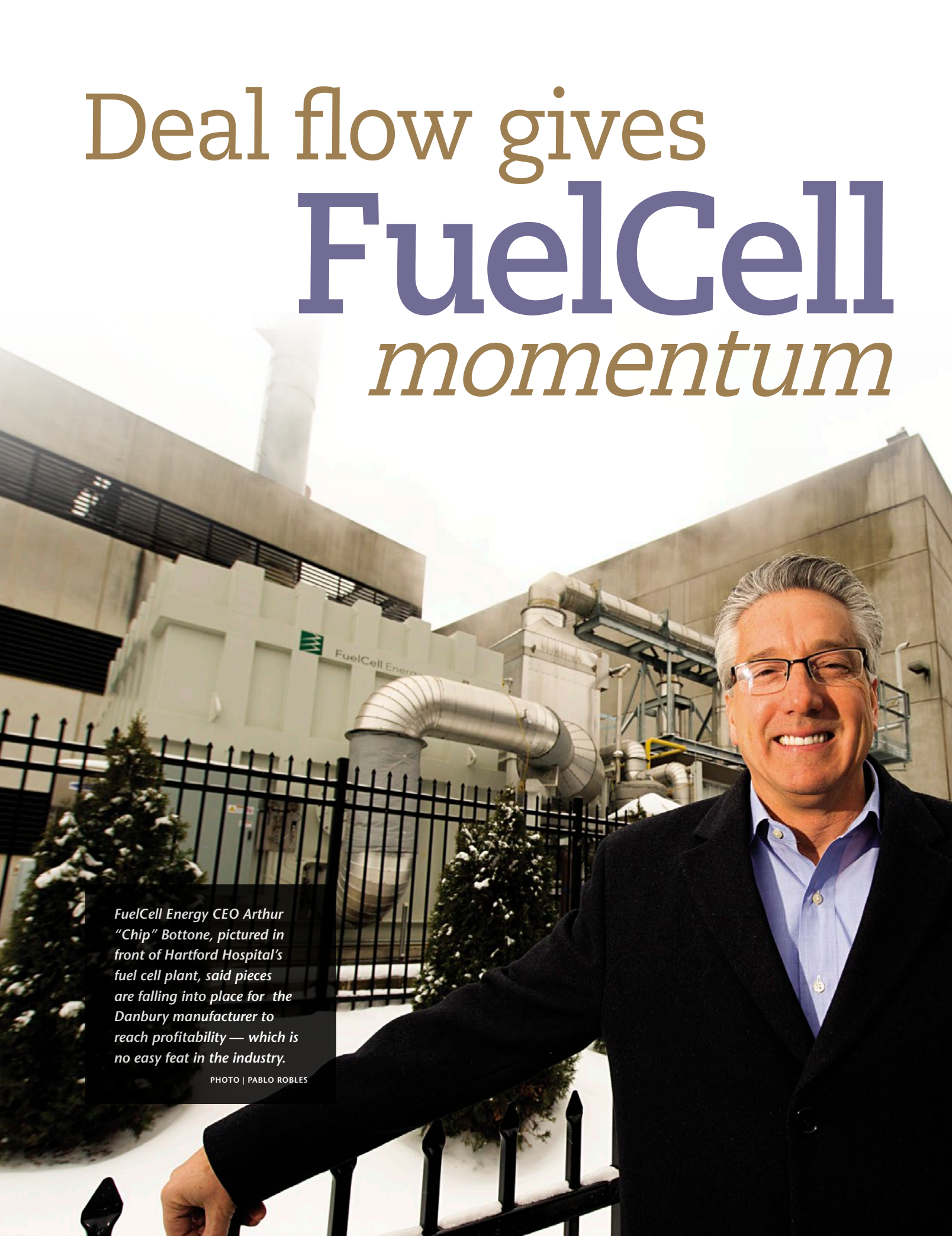
"With the reduced energy and operating costs, we were able to make a potential customer a better offer," Pihl said.

Web employees designed and built many of the improvements onsite themselves.

"Through their commitment, creative thinking and enthusiasm, the employees of Web Industries Hartford have proven that energy efficiency is as good for business as it is for our planet," said Matt Gibbs, director of Connecticut energy efficiency at Eversource. 



# Deal flow gives FuelCell *momentum*



FuelCell Energy CEO Arthur "Chip" Bottone, pictured in front of Hartford Hospital's fuel cell plant, said pieces are falling into place for the Danbury manufacturer to reach profitability — which is no easy feat in the industry.

PHOTO | PABLO ROBLES

By Matt Pilon

**A**fter a series of recent Connecticut deals, Danbury's FuelCell Energy is flirting with a future no longer laden with steady red ink.

The publicly traded manufacturer, which hasn't made a profit since before it began selling commercial power plants in 2003, now has enough projects in its pipeline to nearly triple its fuel cell installations in Connecticut, to approximately 100 megawatts.

That will be a milestone, but it doesn't mean profits are going to come this year. However, losses are the lowest they've been in years, and CEO Arthur "Chip" Bottone insists FuelCell is headed in the right direction.

The pending construction here includes a 63-megawatt fuel cell park in Beacon Falls and a six-megawatt plant at Pfizer's Groton campus. Connecticut remains one of the company's strongest markets, due to its inclusion of fuel cells in the mix of clean technology utilities here are required to buy each year. Connecticut's dense population and high electricity costs also make fuel cells a better

value proposition here than in the Midwest and other areas, because they are compact, quiet and can produce a lot of energy per square foot.

With the help of taxpayer money, FuelCell is ramping up capacity at its Torrington manufacturing plant to serve the growing backlog and future business.

The state agreed in 2014 to provide two low-interest \$10 million loans and up to \$10 million in tax credits. That's helping fund a 102,000-square-foot expansion of the company's Torrington 65,000-square-foot manufacturing facility and the related hiring of up to 325 new positions, which could bring its total to 863 in the state.

Construction should be in full swing this spring.

As of Oct. 31, 2015, the company had grown to 552 workers in Connecticut and 596 worldwide. If it meets hiring pledges over the next four years, the state will forgive \$10 million of the loans.

"We're here. We're a Connecticut company. I don't take that lightly," Bottone said during a February interview in Hartford.

The Torrington expansion will double the number of fuel cells the company can produce a year, to 200 megawatts.

From there, getting to profits is mainly a matter of more companies and utilities adopting fuel cell technology. If Torrington can get enough orders to produce half of that amount in a single year, the company would be in the black, Bottone has said. Torrington's annual "run rate" last year was 70 megawatts.

The Beacon Falls park, which is competing in a state bidding process for a utility power purchase agreement, would be a key step forward, said Jeffrey Osborne, an energy analyst with Cowen & Co.

"A big, chunky project like Beacon Falls would help," Osborne said.

It won't just be about getting enough order to fill the roughly 20 megawatt gap between losses and breakeven, Osborne said.

FuelCell has been shipping approximately 30 megawatts of its Torrington-produced technology to South Korean partner and investor POSCO, which will soon launch its own manufacturing facility to produce FuelCell plants entirely on its own.

FuelCell gets a royalty from every POSCO sale, but it's a lower margin that it gets from selling its Connecticut-made plants. The Asian plant provides assurances







*FuelCell vice presidents Tony Leo, Neil Aiello and Kurt Goddard in front of a fuel cell stack in the Torrington manufacturing plant.*

PHOTO | MATT PILON

► to customers that there won't be any manufacturing disruptions.

FuelCell will need to find enough demand to make up for the 30 megawatts it has been sending to Posco.

"They do need to fill two holes," Osborne said.

## Seeking profits

To date, no publicly traded commercial fuel cell maker has been profitable, which has driven much speculation on who, if anyone, might be first. It's not clear if it will be FuelCell, but the company's in contention.

"It's difficult for us to really put a timeframe on that," said Kurt Goddard, FuelCell's vice president of investor relations, who added that the more large power-plant deals the company can ink the sooner profitability could come.

The company is still losing tens of millions of dollars per



*Hartford Hospital's 1.4-megawatt fuel cell was installed in 2013.*

PHOTO | PABLO ROBLES

year, but it has managed to pare losses from a high in 2008. Its \$32.6 million loss last year was its lowest since 2001.

Revenue peaked at nearly \$188 million in 2013, but fell in 2014 and again 2015. That downward trend could be overcome this year, if the company's revenue guidance of \$170 million to \$210 million holds true. (This story went to press before FuelCell's Q1 earnings report, expected in March.)

Bottone said he's confident in FuelCell's long-term strategy, which is to chase large customers with high-power demands.

An example is a recent deal to install a fuel cell plant at Pfizer's Groton campus. The company is also pursuing multi-megawatt projects in New York, California and Europe which would sell power to utility companies.

"They're not all going to happen tomorrow, but I'll tell you they're all good, large projects that fit that mold for us," Bottone said.

Osborne said big projects like that would help FuelCell reach the demand it needs to turn a profit.

In trying to spur adoption, FuelCell has brought on multiple investment partners to finance plant construction for customers. And it has reduced the per-kilowatt cost of its products through technology enhancements and scaling up its supply chain purchasing.

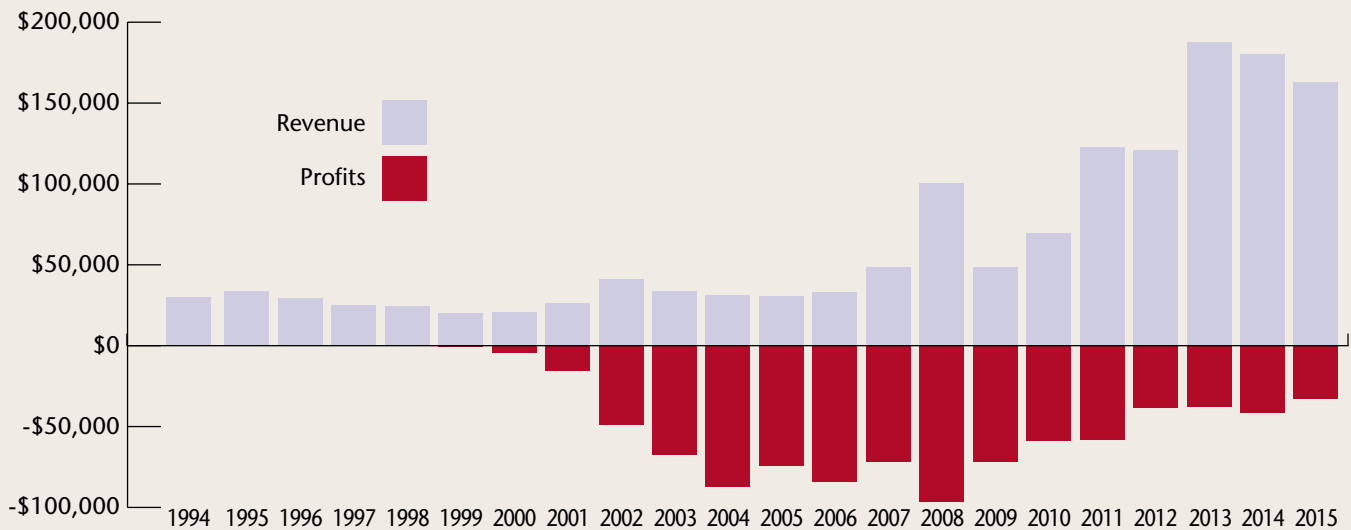
"We can do this, but there are no shortcuts," Bottone said. "Everything is in place to get this company to profitability with a little more [project] volume."

## Challenges to adoption

Fuel cells reform hydrogen from natural gas and combine it with oxygen to create an electrochemical reaction that produces electricity, heat, water and carbon dioxide (but less CO<sub>2</sub> than coal or gas plants). There's also virtually no sulfur oxides or mono-nitrogen oxide emissions.



## Fuelcell energy earnings (in 000s)



SOURCE: SEC FILINGS

FuelCell's configurations allow customers to capture the heat for use in their facilities, and a recently introduced modification of its technology aimed at manufacturers offers a source of nitrogen.

As long as the company can satisfy its investment partners with returns, and its customers with improved power reliability, lower operating costs and a greener emissions footprint, projects will get done, Bottone said. A customer might think fuel cells are innovative, but that's secondary in the purchasing decision, he said.

There are also benefits for municipalities and the state, including taxes and more robust gas infrastructure — a key benefit in a region that faces natural-gas bottlenecks, he said.

### Slumping stock

FuelCell's recent momentum and shrinking losses haven't been enough to solve its stock woes. FCEL shares lost more than half their value last year.

Its share price traded below \$1 from late June to early December, prompting the company to enact a one-for-12 reverse split of its shares to keep its listing on the Nasdaq Capital Market.

As of press time Feb. 22, shares were priced at \$5.05.

Osborne, the analyst, said the company hopes the reverse split will attract more institutional investors.

For more than a year, FuelCell and other energy stocks have suffered from low oil prices, he said. And

investors have also been cautious because slower-than-hoped adoption of fuel cells.

But Osborne's latest assessment of FuelCell's stock in January, prior to Q1 earnings, was a "buy."

"There's certainly improvement," he said. "You can see profitability and you can smell it, but you're not quite there yet."

### Evolving product mix

While FuelCell's market is baseload power for companies and utilities, it's pursuing other areas too.

Coal plant carbon capture is one R&D effort that could open up new markets in coal-heavy states.

Under the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan, coal plants would face increasing pressure to reduce emissions in the years ahead.

FuelCell plans to install a 2.3-megawatt carbon-capture system on a U.S. coal plant — the first such demonstration of its size.

"We see that as a launching point for this to be deployed commercially," said Anthony "Tony" Leo, FuelCell's vice president of application engineering and new technology development, who is a 38-year veteran of the company.

It's also hoping to integrate itself into California's hydrogen vehicle market.

"From a customer perspective in the next three to five years, the mix could be much more diverse than it is today," he said. "Maybe even two to three years." 🍋

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*The JCC of Greater New Haven's solar carport will cut in half the nonprofit's energy usage.*

## CT's largest solar carport

By Matt Pilon

**S**olar carports aren't unheard of in Connecticut, though they're a much more common sight in hot, sunny states like Arizona.

But now, visitors to the Jewish Community Center of Greater New Haven have the opportunity of parking under what builders say is the largest solar carport in New England.

The 750-kilowatt canopy, developed by New York's Solaire Generation in partnership with Bullrock Deutsche Eco Solar Ventures, is also the first carport to be financed under the Connecticut Green Bank's C-Pace-secured power purchase agreement structure.

As a result, JCC didn't have to put down any money upfront.

The carport, which went live over the summer, is expected to generate half of the 1,800 megawatt hours used annually by the JCC's Beckerman/Lender building.

"If electricity purchase rates continue to rise, the carports and solar panels will significantly reduce our costs over their lifetime," Scott Cohen, JCC of Greater New Haven's chief operating officer, said in a statement.

JCC has also recently installed more efficient lighting and a co-generation unit in Woodbridge. 🍋

## Jewish Community Center of greater New Haven

**HEADQUARTERS:** Woodbridge

**CEO:** Judy Diamondstein

**FOUNDED:** 1988

**EMPLOYEES:** 26

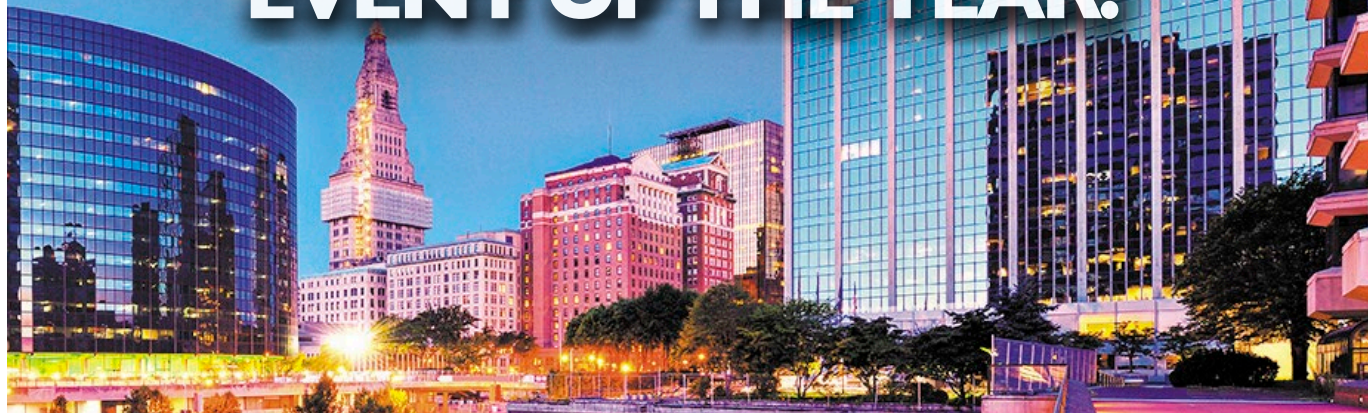
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**DID YOU KNOW?** Intel claims the largest corporate solar carport in the country. The chip maker unveiled the 6.5-megawatt array of canopies last month in California.



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### LEGAL

# Waste-Energy Crossroads

By Lee D. Hoffman

Connecticut's solid waste management and renewable energy policies are at a crossroads. For years, the state has relied on waste-to-energy plants to dispose of municipal waste, allowing it to shutter many of its landfills. But shifting energy markets have hurt the economics of the plants, which may lead to higher disposal fees for businesses and residents.

First, the good news: Connecticut leads the nation in sustainable solid waste management practices, according to Columbia University's Earth Engineering Center. Although several states have better recycling or composting rates, Connecticut garners the top spot by having the highest waste-to-energy conversion rate. As a result, it landfills less waste than most states.

Connecticut long ago recognized the value of reducing landfilling, and took steps to keep the costs of landfill closures to a minimum. Out of this effort was born the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, now known as the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA). Municipalities rely on MIRA to dispose of their waste in waste-to-energy plants. MIRA charges a tipping fee based on the tonnage disposed, and augments that fee with revenues from the production of electricity. Other public and private entities have started to provide similar services to towns and businesses. Whether through MIRA or another entity, the result is the same — tipping fees are offset by electricity sales.

Recent shifts in the energy markets have conspired to make the economics of waste-to-energy more difficult. Waste-to-energy projects in Connecticut are all considered to be "Class II" renewable energy sources. Under Connecticut law, each electricity supplier must purchase a minimum number of Class II renewable energy credits (RECs). Unfortunately, there is a glut of Class II renewable energy credits for sale in New England, and their price has never exceeded the pricing floor. Credits generated by Connecti-



Lee D. Hoffman is chairman of Hartford law firm Pullman & Comley's Regulatory, Energy & Telecommunications Department.

cut plants contribute little to no revenues to those plants.

By itself, anemic REC prices may not cause economic strain on the industry, but they are causing significant shortfalls when coupled with recent developments in the wholesale electricity market. Many waste-to-energy plants entered into long-term electricity supply contracts when wholesale prices were much higher than they are today. Contracts have now expired and wholesale prices have dropped. Combined with cheap RECs, the waste-to-energy industry is feeling strain.

Beyond the industry, it has the potential to affect most of Connecticut's businesses and residents. Because local landfills are no longer an option, the only choice remaining is waste-to-energy plants or shipping waste out of state. There are only a few companies that have the capacity to ship waste out of state by rail. For now, their ability to corner the market and charge hauling premiums is held in check by waste-to-energy competition.

But if the state's waste-to-energy plants become no longer economically viable, tipping fees could rise dramatically, and Connecticut will lose the ability to address waste generation inside its own borders. Massachusetts recognized this problem several years ago and took steps to address it by altering its Class II renewable energy market. Connecticut's leaders have been looking for a solution for the past several years, but one has not emerged. If something doesn't change, it could be residents and businesses who bear the cost. 🍋

## Sustainable Fitness LLC

**FOUNDER:** Anthony Pontecorvo

**EMPLOYEES:** 1

**LAUNCH:** January 2016

**HEADQUARTERS:** Branford

**WEBSITE:**  
SustainableFitnessLLC.com

## Green Exercise

**T**ony Pontecorvo has worked in sales and marketing positions for more than three decades. Recently, he decided to venture out on his own.

Pontecorvo founded and launched Sustainable Fitness LLC on Jan. 1. The fledgling company's core business is selling SportsArt green exercise equipment to corporate fitness centers, apartment communities and universities.

Washington-based SportsArt's ECO POWR exercise bikes and ellipticals contain micro-inverters that convert a user's kinetic energy to electricity.

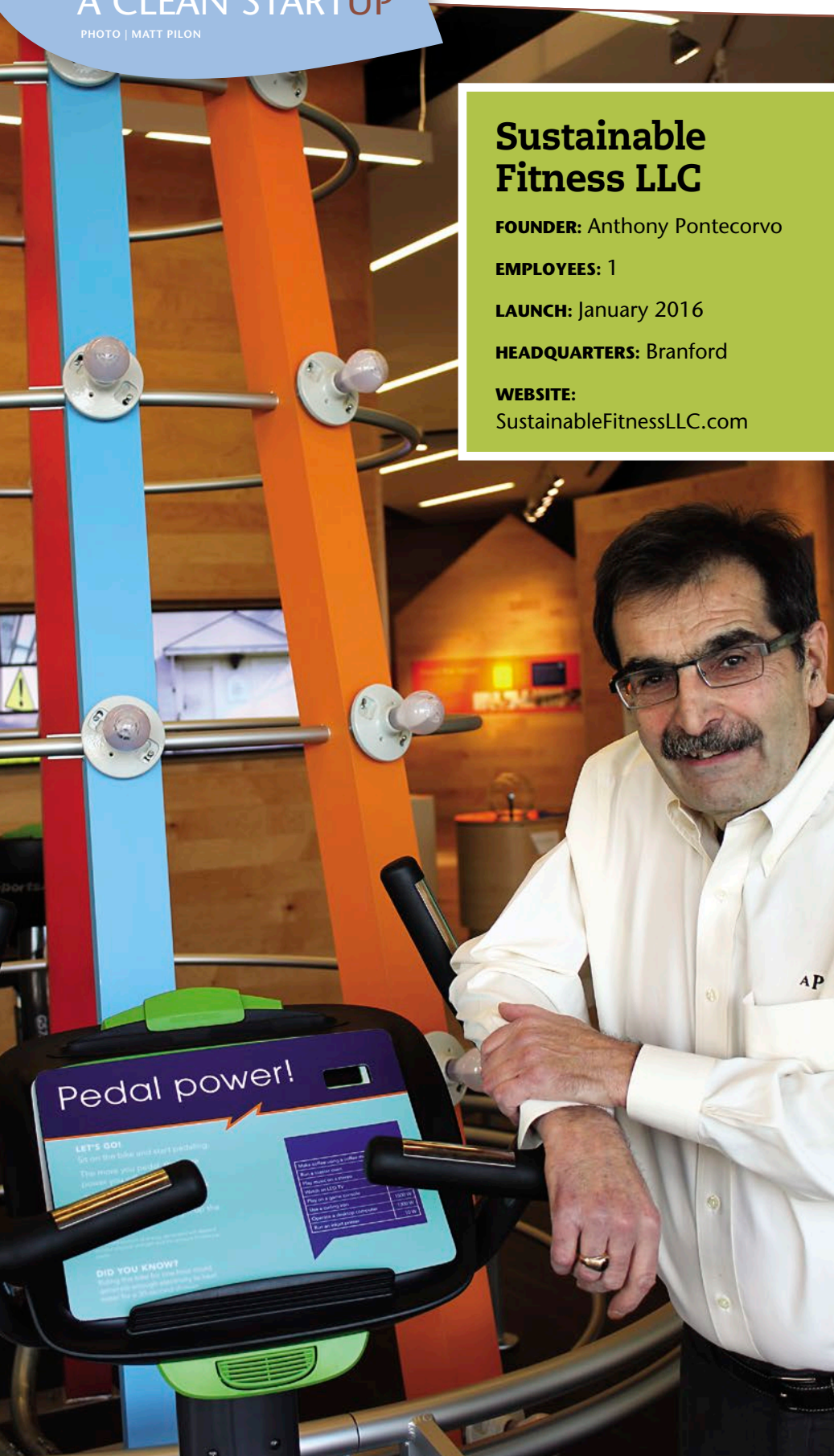
The savings are modest. According to SportsArt, a facility with 10 machines each used 30 minutes a day would save \$1.06 per month. But big gyms with more machines could save much more.

Pontecorvo said the green benefits are a big part of his sales pitch.

"It's an uphill battle, but I'm a pretty determined person and I believe in the product and the concept," Pontecorvo said.

The latest commercial models retail from \$3,800 to \$7,400.

Energize Connecticut's North Haven showroom has an interactive exhibit featuring four ECO-POWR cycles. Pontecorvo helped facilitate the exhibit, which teaches visitors about how much work it takes to create electricity. 🌱





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TUESDAY | FEBRUARY 16, 2016

**New England to pay less for future power capacity**  
The price to guarantee that power plants will be available when they're needed most has come down from last year, according to grid operator ISO-New England.  
[READ MORE >>](#)

**CT ranks 18th in solar industry jobs**  
Connecticut had 1,951 per capita solar industry jobs in 2015, the 18th highest in the country by population, according to a new survey conducted by an industry group.  
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**CT's remaining coal plant to convert to gas**  
The owner of a coal-fired power plant in Bridgeport — the last such plant still operating in the state — is planning to convert the facility to cleaner-burning natural gas.  
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**Supreme Court delays EPA emissions rule**  
The U.S. Supreme Court last week delayed implementation of new regulations aimed at reducing power plant emissions over the next several decades.  
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**CT joins 16 states in clean energy accord**  
Gov. Dannel P. Malloy said Tuesday that he has signed a pledge with 16 other states that commits Connecticut to work together to diversify its energy sources, promote clean transportation, and modernize energy infrastructure.  
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**U.S. oil bankruptcies spike 379%**  
Bankruptcy filings are flying in the American oil patch.  
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**GREEN BUSINESS: BY THE NUMBERS**

New England Fuel Mix (Fuels currently generating power)	Percent of region's electricity
Natural Gas	45%
Nuclear	29%
Renewables	11%
Hydro	8%
Coal	6%
Electricity	6%

(Price in cents per kilowatt) Connecticut New England

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Energize Connecticut wants to help you make smart energy choices. We can guide you to

the incentive and rebate solutions that fit your projects and can offset your equipment costs. From upgrading existing equipment to building and outfitting brand-new state-of-the-art facilities, energy-saving solutions not only save you money up front, they also boost your bottom line by reducing operating costs for years to come.

**Contractors**—Learn about the latest energy-efficient technologies and building practices to help your clients make the most of their budgets.

Find the latest energy efficiency solutions by calling **877-WISE-USE** or visiting **[EnergizeCT.com/businesses](http://EnergizeCT.com/businesses)**